(b) the amount sanctioned so far for the exploitation of the said area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) Government has no plan to exploit zinc deposits at Kapad Ghughara area near Ajmer City (Rajasthan). However, Hindustan Zinc (HZL), a public sector undertaking of the Department of Mines, has been granted a Mining Lease (ML) in Kayar, district Ajmer (Rajasthan) where drilling work is being carried out for techno-economic feasibility study scheduled to be completed by March 2002. For exploitation of lead-zinc deposits in Ghughra Bhunabay area district Ajmer (Rajasthan), the ML was granted by the State Government of Rajasthan to HZL. However, the State Government of Rajasthan revoked the said ML, HZL has filed a Revision Application (RA) against revocation orders of the State Government before the Central Tribunal. Thus, the matter is subjudice and the decision on ML will depend on the orders of the Tribunal on the RA.

(b) Does not arise.

Import of coal by MMTC

2217. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) how much quantity of coal have been imported by the MMTC upto the December, 1999 and at what rate;

(b) whether huge stock of coal is lying at various mines in our country;

(c) whether it is a fact that thousands of labourers are jobless due to mis import;

(d) whether inter-ministerial groups know about this fact; and

(e) what action has been taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) The amount of steam coal imported by MMTC during the last three years is as under:

S.No.	Year	Quantity (Tonnes)	Value(cost & freight) (Rs. in Crores)
1.	1997-98	2,68.044	53.73
2.	1998-99	1,10,338	24.79
3.	1999-2000 (upto Dec'1999)	2,59,693	39.95

(b) Total vendible pithead coal stock with Coal India Limited (CIL) as on 1.2.2000 is 22.60 million tonnes (data provisional).

(c) There is no retrenchment in CIL on account of coal imports in the country.

(d) No Inter-Ministerial Group has been formed on the retrenchment issue.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

Promotion of marble industry of Rajasthan

†2218. SHRI ONKAR SINGH LAKHAWAT: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Rajasthan have requested the Central Government to remove necessity of having mineral scheme for low value minerals like quartz, felspar, silica sand, clay, calcite, mica, yellow okar, red okar etc;

(b) if so, the details of the action taken by Government on it;

(c) whether Government are in favour of reducing excise duty for encouraging and promoting marble industry of Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) No Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above does not arise.

(c) and (d) The excise duty rates for all items including those for marble are laid down by the Government as part of the annual Budgetary exercise. However the Government has constituted a Group on Marble development (GMD) in September 1999 to encourage promotion of marble mining and industry.

Aluminium ingot price increased by NALCO

2219. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state: -

(a) whether the National Aluminium Company Ltd. (NALCO) has increased the price of aluminium ingot;

(b) if so, since when; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.